

Minutes of a meeting of the Keighley Area Committee held on Thursday, 16 November 2023 in Council Chamber - Keighley Town Hall

Commenced 6.00 pm
Concluded 7.30 pm

Present – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	GREEN
Firth M Hussain Lintern Zaman	Brown Loy Glentworth	Whitaker

Councillor Firth in the Chair

22. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

In the interest of transparency Members declared the following interests:

- Councillor Lintern disclosed, in relation to the Keighley Locality Plan Progress Update (Minute 29) that she worked for a local housing association. This was to reflect the ‘Decent Home’ Keighley locality wide priority detailed in that item.
- Councillor Firth disclosed, in relation to the Allocation of Coming Funding 20233-2024 (Minute 30) that she was a non-voting member of Hainworth Wood Community Centre which had been the recipient of a grant.
- Councillor Brown disclosed, in relation to the Allocation of Combined Funding 20233-2024 (Minute 30) that he was a Member of the Grants Advisory Group.

To be actioned by Director of Legal & Governance

23. MINUTES

Resolved –

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2023 be signed as a correct record.

24. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

25. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

26. REFERRAL FROM COUNCIL 17 OCTOBER 2023

The Council, at its meeting on 17 October 2023, had resolved that a petition, regarding traffic calming measures in East Morton, be referred to this Committee and Members were asked to consider what action they wished to take regarding that matter.

The Strategic Director, Place, addressed the meeting and reported that the North Area Traffic Team would design an evidence-based proposal for East Morton and would be looking to consult with the public at some point in January 2024. Depending on the outcome of the consultation, and discussions with the Portfolio Holder, they would be looking for delivery within the next financial year subject to governance and financial agreements.

To be actioned by Strategic Director, Place

Overview and Scrutiny Area: Regeneration & Environment

27. SMART STREET LIGHTING - UPDATE ON PROJECT PROGRESS

The report of the Strategic Director, Place, **Document “G”** provided a progress report on the Smart Street Lighting Project and the work undertaken to date.

Members were reminded that the Council had approved an invest to save project of £45m to update its current lighting stock, of approximately 56,500 assets, with the aim of significantly reducing energy consumption, maintenance costs and reducing CO² emissions. The project would replace the existing inefficient lighting with energy efficient LED's whilst retaining most of the existing lighting columns. It had been envisaged that there would be a need for the replacement of approximately 15,600 life expired lighting columns which were identified during a survey of all existing assets (carried out in 2019-20). The new lighting solution would be controlled using a Central Management System (CMS) to control the lighting via a Low power wide area network (LoRaWAN) platform to facilitate

Internet of Things (IoT) connectivity for a variety of sensors and devices.

The project was split into two work streams “In Scope” works around 48,300 assets which were the standard column replacements, connections and luminaire replacements on the majority of streets across the district and “Out of Scope” works around 8,200 which were the more challenging assets such as heritage assets, pole mounted and wall mounted luminaires, columns in back streets, overhead cabled columns etc.

It was reported that the “In Scope” works were being undertaken by the external contractor Amey OW Ltd. and the “Out of Scope” works were by a mix of the Councils in house delivery teams for the luminaire replacements and a further contract resource for the remaining column replacements and connections.

Appended to the report were charts outlining load reduction; energy savings and CO2 savings by ward and identifying the smart street lighting works by work type and completed works, by ward, to date.

Following a detailed presentation Members asked a number of questions including if vehicle charging posts were to be attached to lighting columns and queried if those columns had been moved near to the roadside. It was explained that it had been intended to utilise the columns for electric charging, but it had been found that the cables feeding the lights were not big enough to support that proposal.

It was questioned if any of the lights would be turned off as opposed to being dimmed at certain times. It was explained that at the current time there were no proposals for any lighting to be turned off. A report, including the approach to overnight dimming, was to be considered by the Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 November 2023.

Missing signs on columns was raised and it was confirmed that, contractually, any signs which featured on the old columns must be replaced.

The installation of shields was discussed, and Members were advised old shields would be replaced on the new columns. The new lighting was at six metres as opposed to the previous five metres, so they cast light differently. Work would be undertaken with residents. Clip on shades, which could include bespoke shields if required, could also be provided if necessary and if those measures were not effective the lights could be dimmed later in the evenings.

The removal of column numbers during the replacement period was discussed and it was confirmed that the old numbering sequence had become out of sequence. It was intended with column replacements that entire streets would be renumbered sequentially. The CMS system would be able to identify faults accurately and that information would be sent to fault crews.

A Member whilst acknowledging the advantages of the project felt that implementation had been disjointed and questions why sub-contractors had been appointed when the project end date was not imminent. In response it was clarified that targets for the installation of luminaires had been impacted by the COVID pandemic and supply chain shortages leaving the project behind targets.

To address that issue the installation had been increased from 135 per week to 185. It was acknowledged that when those works were condensed in one area it could be disruptive. The contractor was aware of issues and the majority had been rectified. There were still some issues with open holes in the ground and officers had met with the contractors recently and requested control measures to mitigate those problems. It was explained that holes should not remain open for more than 10 days. Officers had asked for a track of each stage of installation; they had been provided with a screen tracker developed and would receive more information shortly and had been assured that measures were in place to prevent further issues.

In response to concerns about the public expectations of the Council; the danger to the public if lights were out and holes open during dark evenings and the reputational damage caused to the Council Members were assured that pressure was being exerted on the contractors and they had been instructed to utilise smaller barriers to prevent the blockage of pavements.

It was questioned if commercial lawyers had been involved in the development of the contract and it was confirmed that a project team, including legal officers, had been involved in the development of the contract and procurement officer meetings were held in house regularly. The contract had been developed through a contractor led process to prevent any reprisals if the Council had caused any delays to the project.

A Member was concerned that she was not aware of the timetable of works taking place in her ward. She was advised that the information had been provided to ward members and reports had been taken to the Area Committee prior to her appointment. The supply delays due to COVID could not be envisaged and had been the biggest issue encountered. Whilst the column replacement was the most difficult element assurances were provided that the project was still on target. Accurate progress reports would be uploaded to the Council's web site shortly.

It was queried how any issues with the lighting system should be reported and Members were advised to use the existing reporting systems.

A Member raised an issue with contractors cutting hedges which left massive gaps and Council officers being blamed for the damage. In response it was explained that in advance of installation works inspectors visited to identify access issues. The Council's Arboricultural Service was utilised but had outsourced some of the work due to capacity issues.

An emergency issue in the Ingrow area was reported by a Member who explained that a lighting column which had been dug out and was still lit, had ended up in the road. An emergency response had been provided and barriers erected. It was agreed to provide the exact location of that incident.

In response it was confirmed that there had been three incidents where evacuation had undermined columns and winds had blown over lighting columns. Contractors had been asked for incident reports and to implement control measures to prevent any recurrence.

A Member referred to complaints from constituents that the lights were too light but believed that residents did feel more safe and secure. Assurances were provided that the locations of columns had not changed but that each asset had been designed for individual areas.

It was questioned if during the project any repairs the responsibility of the contractor and it was confirmed the contractors were responsible for the new lanterns and for 12 months following completion of the project. No holes should be left open for more than 10 days and no more than 140 holes should be open at any one time. If the Council slowed down the project, it could incur penalties.

A number of failed lights in the Central Ward were reported and it was stated that once repaired failing was recurring. In response it was confirmed that faults with the luminaires should be dealt with within one week. If there were issues with the power supply that was reported to Northern PowerGrid and was guaranteed to be fixed within 35 days.

The source of the lighting columns was questioned with a Member referring to two producers based in the Keighley area. It was confirmed that the supplier was decided by the contractor but that there were social elements built into the contract which must be adhered to. It was believed that the columns were sourced from manufacturers based in Nottingham and Sheffield.

The payback period for the project was queried and it was confirmed that this was within 37 years.

A Member believed the lighting seemed brighter but cast light over a smaller area and some areas appeared to be darker. The position of columns was discussed, and it was questioned if columns in trees would be addressed. In response Members were advised that the LED lights were more efficient and designed to cast light where required and to throw light across roads. Columns should not be within trees and the Member who had raised that issue was asked to identify the location so that measures could be taken.

It was felt that some lighting columns did not fit into the character of their locations and conservation areas. It was explained that work had been undertaken with the conservation officers. Columns which had been painted black would be reinstated although this would happen at the end of the project.

The sustainability of the replacements was questioned, and it was reported that there was a 20 year lifespan. In response to questions about less maintenance requiring reduced staffing to repair it was agreed that, in theory, that was the case, however, the maintenance teams did not just deal with streetlights. The age profile of the existing team had been considered and it could be that naturally occurring vacancies may not be replaced.

The scope to commission additional lighting in the future was questioned and it was explained that the budget which was previously devolved to Area Committee's had been removed.

The effect of the new lighting on animals was questioned and Members were advised that research had been conducted and considered in the contract. The

lighting provided was a warmer colour which was not harmful to animals and similar to the old-style lighting. It was difficult to confirm the impact, but research had negated the negativity around the new lighting. Work had been conducted with bio-diversity officers and it had been confirmed that the new lights did not have the harmful effect on bats which the old system had created.

The Chair complimented the project team on their responsiveness and the savings which had been made. She requested that Members be informed when the programme of works was uploaded to the Council's web page and when new reporting systems were in place.

Lessons learned throughout the project were questioned and Members were advised that a 'lessons learned' log had been developed and were being documented. The inclusion of legal officers in procurement meetings had resulted in the development of a more robust contract.

Resolved –

- 1. That the progress of the Smart Street Lighting Project be acknowledged, and further updates be welcomed.**
- 2. That the Smart Street Lighting Project, and the positive impact for the Keighley constituency and its wards be endorsed.**

To be actioned by Strategic Director, Place

Overview and Scrutiny Area – Regeneration & Environment

28. KEIGHLEY LOCALITY PLAN - PROGRESS UPDATE Q1&2 2023

The Strategic Director, Place, presented **Document “H”** which reminded Members that Bradford Council, working with partner agencies, was working to strengthen its approach to Locality Working. A key part of that approach was the development of Locality Plans.

The Keighley Locality Plan 2022-25 was approved by the Area Committee in June 2022. Document “H” provided an update on the progress achieved towards addressing the Locality and Ward priorities set out in the Locality Plan during April – September 2023. Members were advised that the report had been presented to Executive and had received positive feedback for its progress and partnership working.

Document “H” included progress and one piece of work from each of the plan's six themes from each ward which had been put together by ward officers, associates and the advanced youth practitioner and the team were thanked by the Area Co-ordinator for their efforts and the production of the good news issues.

Following acknowledgement from Members that the attendance of colleagues from the Area Co-ordinator's office had strengthened ward meetings it was explained that the place meetings across the locality had been enhanced by a change to Ward Leadership Teams focusing on the themes of the locality plan.

The attendance of Ward Officers involved in those themes reinforced that people were together in working on those themes.

A Member referred to a good news item in the Craven Ward which she felt was not welcomed by all residents and suggested the inclusion of the provision of affordable housing in the Yorkshire Housing development. It was agreed that efforts would be made to circulate future news stories prior to publication.

Whilst acknowledging the fantastic work undertaken by Ward Officers a Member raised concerns about the lack of temporary housing accommodation in the town. He reported people's reluctance to engage with private landlords and he was advised that continuing efforts were being made to address the lack of temporary accommodation.

A Member referred to a family which had moved to Keighley and settled into the area. They had subsequently been moved to Bradford centre and no longer felt safe.

Whilst echoing Members' sentiments that ward colleagues, partners and others were doing a wonderful job a correction was made to actions, outcomes and indicators for Ilkley and it was explained that the premises accommodating youth sessions were based on Little Lane.

Resolved –

- 1. That the progress made during the period April – September 2023 towards addressing the locality-wide and ward-based priorities set out in the Keighley Locality Plan 2022-25, as detailed in Document “H” at Appendix A, be welcomed.**
- 2. That Council officers and partner agencies involved in the progress towards addressing the locality-wide and ward-based priorities set out in the Keighley Locality Plan 2022-25, be thanked for their hard work.**
- 3. That the Keighley Area Co-ordinator be requested to present a further Progress Update in six months-time.**

To be actioned by Strategic Director, Place

Overview and Scrutiny Area - Corporate

29. ALLOCATION OF COMBINED FUNDING 2023-2024

The report of the Strategic Director, Place, (Document “I”) presented the recommendations from the Grants Advisory Group for the Keighley Area in respect of the allocation of funding that had been amalgamated from funding received by Bradford Council from the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), the West Yorkshire Mayor's Cost of Living fund (CoLF) and the Household Support Fund (HSF).

The report revealed that the City of Bradford Metropolitan Council (CBMDC), via its Constituency Area Co-ordinator had invited applications from eligible local organisations to apply for funding available from the West Yorkshire Mayor's Cost of Living Fund (WYCA CoLF), Household Support Fund (HSF) and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

Applications from eligible local organisations across the Keighley constituency were invited to apply from the total funding of £97,128. The funds from CoLF, HSF and UKPSF were combined to provide emergency local services and support during the cost-of-living crisis, specifically for food banks/parcels, warm places debt advice and support for mental health.

The decisions on the allocation of funding were devolved to Area Committee to distribute to the Voluntary and Community Sector. The Grants Advisory Group (GAG) was made up of elected members nominated by the Area Committee at the beginning of each municipal year to help support the decision-making process in conjunction with the Area Co-ordinator. Once all grant applications are appraised and before moving to contracting, the Area Co-ordinator will present the recommendations of the GAG to the full Area Committee to enable agreement to proceed contracting.

The GAG recommendations for the allocation of funding were appended to the report and a Member questioned if all groups which had applied were detailed in that appendix. In response it was confirmed that all applicants were included and noted that one of the applications had not been supported.

It was acknowledged that the Area Co-ordinator's officer was receiving increased levels of funding for its approval and that the GAG had been developed to consider only Community Chest applications. The Community Chest funding was awarded from base budget with GAG assisting the Area Co-ordinator's in his ultimate decisions.

Funding being discussed at the meeting, and to follow, was delegated to the Area Committee via the Executive and Members were the decision makers. Members were asked if they wished to continue with the GAG, which was not a constituted body, providing recommendations for approval or if they wished for all Members to consider all applications.

In response to questions, it was reported that the GAG had met three times in the previous two months and would meet another four times in the coming six weeks.

Members acknowledge that the GAG considered each application received in depth. It was confirmed that the group's judgement was trusted and made in the best interest of the whole district and against the relevant criteria.

It was agreed that if GAG decisions were trusted that those decisions, made in private, should not be unpicked in public.

In response to questions about how Members would be aware of funding available it was confirmed that all Members received confirmation to encourage groups to apply. They would be notified, via meeting agendas, when GAG

decisions were to be approved and it was agreed that they could be contacted with about the future GAG meeting dates at the appropriate time.

It was agreed that the GAG should consider making recommendations to the Committee for funding and that the decision to continue with that process be reviewed at the beginning of the next municipal year.

Resolved –

- 1. That the recommendations for the allocation of funding, as outlined in Appendix C to Document “I” be approved.**
- 2. That it be agreed that where decision making on future grant funding is devolved to the Area Committee the Grant Advisory Group be requested to bring recommendations for approval by the Area Committee and that decision is to be reviewed at the beginning of the municipal year.**

To be actioned by: Strategic Director, Place

Overview and Scrutiny Area: Corporate

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Keighley Area Committee.

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER